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“SHAPES OF GRIEF”: *HAMLET*’S GRAMMAR SCHOOL PASSIONS

BY ROSS KNECHT

My Grammar, I define to be an Art,
Which teacheth me to write and speak my heart

—Christopher Harvey, *Schola cordis*

Ye know not, what hurt ye do to learning, that care not for wordes,
but for matter, and so make a deuorse betwixt the tong and the hart.

—Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster*

Readers of William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* have for some time observed “the intensely critical, almost disillusionist, attitude of the play towards language itself.”¹ This is especially true of the play’s protagonist, who, in his professed clumsiness with poetic “numbers” and his impatience with the tedium of “words, words, words,” adopts a traditional anti-rhetorical position, a dismissal of the outward qualities of language in favor of the things they strive to represent but often only obscure.² The position draws on the longstanding opposition between words and things, a dichotomy frequently raised in early modern discourse on grammar and pedagogy. Erasmus addresses the distinction between *verba* and *res* in *De ratione studii* (1521), associating the former with the basic pedagogy of the grammar schools and the latter with university level study.³ Early comedies like *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—in their adolescent eroticism, delight in wordplay, and frequent allusions to Latin pedagogy—may be said to belong to the world of *verba* and the grammar schools. Hamlet, however, is a Shakespearean hero who is at home not in the grammar school like the lovers of the comedies but in the rarefied realm of university discourse, here denoted by the image of Wittenberg. Hamlet is an intellectual who has ascended beyond the matter of the *trivium*: already a master of *verba*, he desires to grapple with *res*.

The play itself, however, draws attention to its own artifice, its own verbal constitution, through its insistent metatheatricality, undermining its protagonist's campaign against the limits of language. Thus while Hamlet the character is intent on transcending linguistic representation, *Hamlet* the play revels in it, ostentatiously parading its status as an edifice of "mere words."⁴ The tension between Hamlet's desire for unmediated access to things and the play's linguistic self-consciousness has been insightfully explored by such critics as Richard Waswo, Robert Weimann, and Bruce Danner.⁵ But a crucial area of this conflict has so far escaped notice. Hamlet's desire to transcend language is most clearly represented by his attempts to adumbrate an interiority that lies beyond the power of verbal signification. It is in his inward passions, those privately held feelings and impressions that he struggles to translate into outward action, that Hamlet locates a realm beyond language, as we see in his insistence that "I have not art to reckon my groans" (2.2.120). But the very opposition of passion and action that defines this ineffable inwardness is derived from the structure of language, and the terms used to explore it borrowed from the discourse of grammar. The clearest evidence of this debt to grammar appears in Hamlet's "To be or not to be" speech. In this famous meditation on being, this deliberation on whether it is better "to suffer" or "to stand against a sea of troubles," the text employs a set of terms and verbal configurations that Shakespeare would have learned not from reading Michel de Montaigne or some other philosopher, but from the lessons of the grammar school (3.1.57–59): "The Infinitive signifieth to do, to suffer, or to be."⁶ Thus we find in *Hamlet* an important connection between the culture of the grammar school represented in the early comedies, and the drive towards the ineffable that has since its own time established the play as a work "to please the wiser sort."⁷ And it is precisely at those moments when the text strives to indicate a realm beyond language that the debt to grammar becomes most apparent.

Sarah Beckwith's recent study, "Shakespeare and the Grammar of Forgiveness," offers an artful and perceptive reading of Shakespeare's late drama, arguing that while tragedies such as *Hamlet* bear witness to the destructive consequences of "a split between a self that 'passeth show' and a face and body that can only betray a mind too lonely and inaccessible to be expressed," the later plays heal this rift by cultivating a language of forgiveness, pioneering what Beckwith calls a "theater of embodiment" in the union between inward being and outward expression. Beckwith's "grammatical investigation," which draws upon the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Stanley Cavell, entails an

understanding of “language as act, as event in the world, and so asks us to extend our conception of the work of language beyond the work of representation.”⁸ With this principle in mind, Hamlet’s claim that he has “that within which passes show” becomes something more than a mere gesture towards an interior space (1.2.85): it is a demand for acknowledgment, an appeal to sympathy, a subtle chastisement of the heartless world around him. As such, his words are not inadequate, as they paradoxically claim: they exert a profound influence upon the world of the play and manifest Hamlet’s own being in that world. As Cavell writes, archly framing his comments as advice to Hamlet himself, “To let yourself matter is . . . to acknowledge that your expressions in fact express you, that they are yours, that you are in them. This means allowing yourself to be comprehended, something you can always deny. Not to deny it is, I would like to say, to acknowledge your body, and the body of your expressions, to be yours, you on earth, all that will ever *be* of you.”⁹

Beckwith’s reading of Shakespeare unfolds within the context of the Reformation, in the wake of the traumatic interruption of the rituals and practices that for centuries gave form and meaning to the lives of the medieval English. Of particular significance is the loss of the sacrament of penance, which according to Beckwith served a central role in establishing and maintaining communal relationships. Shakespeare’s late drama works to remedy this loss by developing a new language of acknowledgment and reconciliation, a “grammar of forgiveness,” within the secular arena of the theater. The present essay provides a different historical and institutional context for a Wittgensteinian reading of *Hamlet* by demonstrating the play’s engagement with the pedagogical and rhetorical culture of its age. *Hamlet* emerges from a Humanist culture steeped in grammar and rhetoric, a culture that understands human action and experience through the frame of the language arts. It reaches the stage at a time when this rhetorical culture is being challenged by empirically minded critics such as Francis Bacon, for whom the autonomy of language that prevailed under Humanism was a “distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter.”¹⁰ Although the play is marked by this new distrust of the primacy of language, it is nonetheless a product of a Humanist education and habitually recurs to the discourse of the language arts, even in its attempts to evoke an extra-linguistic interiority.¹¹ I am convinced by Beckwith’s argument that we are still too quick to take Hamlet at his word when he claims a self beyond the scope of words.¹² In celebrating an inner being that purports to lie outside the text, we neglect the

play itself, privileging a self-abnegating metaphysics over the forms of life so vividly realized in its language. We also fail to see that Hamlet's claims of a private and ineffable interiority are themselves verbal acts, rhetorical gestures that operate within a particular tradition and abide by the rules of a particular grammar.

The key term in my analysis is "grammar," which I use in a way that seeks to reconcile the Wittgensteinian sense with the understanding of grammar cultivated by the Humanist educational practices of the sixteenth century. For Wittgenstein, grammar comprises the fluid set of rules and conventions that guide and give meaning to any language, practice, or performance. Language in Wittgenstein is not a static system of reference, but an ongoing, ever changing activity, an ensemble of language games performed in specific situations for specific purposes. The meaning of language is established not by correspondence with some external or internal object of reference, but rather by its use, by its effective engagement with the world. Grammar, which provides the rules for our language games, grants meaning to language insofar that it tells us how language is used.

A different, but similarly broad, definition of grammar obtained in the early modern period. Grammar then was not simply a set of syntactic rules, but a liberal art, the primary and most pervasive of the *trivia*: in the words of Brian Cummings, it was "the *ars* before and within every other *ars*."¹³ As the ground of education and one of the most basic practices of acculturation and socialization, grammar provided for the early moderns a framework for understanding human experience. Thus early modern writers could speak in terms that anticipate Wittgenstein of "the grammar of the heart," or "the grammar rules of affection."¹⁴ Such echoes of grammar school discourse, which appear frequently throughout early modern literature, suggest the interdependence of internal states and outward expressions, the "radical, fundamental harmony of word and world" proposed by Wittgenstein.¹⁵ In addition to the Wittgensteinian readings of Beckwith and David Schalkwyk, my argument here builds upon the recent historiography of the grammar school by such critics as Cummings, Lynn Enterline, Lynne Magnusson, Jonathan Hope, and Jeff Dolven.¹⁶ This important scholarship has begun to demonstrate the pervasive influence of pedagogy on early modern writing, not only in providing necessary literary and rhetorical training, but in establishing the conditions for "the convincing effects of character and emotion" for which writers like Shakespeare are celebrated.¹⁷

Outside the character of Hamlet himself, the world of *Hamlet* is one in which, to quote Anne Ferry's characterization of the Renaissance, "man's inward and outward experiences [are] viewed as closely parallel . . . no great separation [is] consistently conceived to exist between them."¹⁸ We do not get the sense from most of the characters in the play that there is an unbridgeable gulf between outward expression and inward states, between words and behaviors and that which they may signify. When Hamlet's inscrutable conduct confounds the court, Claudius does not attribute their confusion to a discrepancy between Hamlet's outward behavior and his inward thoughts; instead, he assumes the two to be transformed in concert: "nor th'exterior nor the inward man / Resembles what it was" (2.2.6–7). Even Claudius's private confession that "Words without thoughts never to heaven go" suggests not an absolute distinction between words and their meanings, but rather the insufficiency of his own performance of repentance, as he has not renounced the prizes won by his treachery (3.3.98):

That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder—
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned and retain the offence?
(3.3.53–56)

What Claudius's words lack, then, are practical actions: the abdication and confession that would constitute genuine repentance. His words fail not because they lack some inward or outward object of reference, but because they are pronounced apart from the context and circumstances necessary for the practice of repentance.

We can see the harmony of inward and outward states with particular clarity in Polonius's account of what he takes to be Hamlet's pining for Ophelia. This is of course a misdiagnosis: what he believes to be love melancholy is in fact the half-feigned madness brought on by Hamlet's encounter with the ghost. Nevertheless, the lines demonstrate the way that affective states such as melancholy are understood to be manifest in their expression. Polonius explains that upon being rebuffed in his advances towards Ophelia, Hamlet

Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves
And all we mourn for.
(2.2.147–51)

Hamlet's melancholy advances through a series of stages in a familiar and recognizable pattern: first sadness, then lack of appetite and sleeplessness, then fatigue and light-headedness, and finally madness. Its beginning is disappointment in love; its end, insanity. I want to place particular emphasis on the use of the term "declension" to describe this sequential pattern. "Declension" is a technical term in grammar, referring to the successive forms of an inflected noun, pronoun, or adjective. In addition to this specialized definition, the *OED* lists the more general senses of a "deviation or declining from a standard, falling away," and "sinking into a lower or inferior condition," citing the speech of Polonius and lines from *Richard III* (we might add a similar usage in *Henry IV, Part Two*).¹⁹ Certainly there is the suggestion of "decline" in the passage, for Hamlet's state progressively deteriorates in Polonius's account. But the only other contemporary uses of this wider sense come from Shakespeare himself: all other instances of the term cited by the *OED* prior to 1660 are confined to the technical discourse of grammar. It seems safe to assume, then, that the lines are intended to recall the grammatical sense of "declension," associating the progressive stages of Hamlet's melancholy with the forms of the Latin noun. There are, we should note, six stages demarcated in Polonius's speech, and there are six cases of Latin nouns observed in the Tudor grammar school.²⁰ But why use a grammatical term here? What does grammar have to do with an affective condition such as melancholy?

In one of the more cryptic aphorisms of the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein writes that "Grammar tells us what kind of object anything is."²¹ For Wittgenstein, as I have suggested, "grammar" names the set of rules and conventions that guide the use of language. Since the meaning of a word in Wittgenstein is derived from its use rather than from its object of reference, the rules that guide the use of a word also establish its meaning. Grammar provides the necessary conditions under which an object may be publically recognized and understood.

Grammar is no less fundamental to the phenomena of inner life than to any other object, for "an 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria."²² We are accustomed to thinking of the phenomena of inward life as existing prior to their expression in language: we imagine that we feel some pain or desire, and subsequently use a word to name that feeling. Wittgenstein inverts this process, arguing that we first learn how to speak of pain and desire from the world around us, and then accommodate this way of speaking to our own inward states. As Schalkwyk writes, "the language of inwardness is constituted by

public life. The meanings of the words used of inward states are not those states themselves, but rather publicly derived rules and uses.”²³ In a well-known discussion that has come to be known as the private language argument, Wittgenstein contends that for a language to be meaningful, it must be conform to standards of correct usage, a publically sanctioned “grammar.” A private language, in which words “refer to what only the speaker can know—to his immediate private sensations,” lacks such a grammar and consequently cannot function:

But what does it mean to say that he has ‘named his pain’?—How has he managed this naming of pain? And whatever he did, what was its purpose?—When one says ‘He gave his name to his sensation’, one forgets that much must be prepared in the language for mere naming to make sense. And if we speak of someone’s giving a name to a pain, the grammar of the word ‘pain’ is what has been prepared here; it indicates the post where the new word is stationed.²⁴

To speak of pain we must first understand the grammar of pain: the words and constructions we use to speak of pain, the situations in which it makes sense to have pain, the proper responses to another’s pain (such as sympathy and pity), and so on. Even what may appear to be a private, inward sensation such as pain requires a particular grammar by which it may be publically known.

I want to suggest that Polonius’s declension of melancholy is analogous to Wittgenstein’s grammar of pain. To describe the progress of Hamlet’s melancholy as a declension is to imply that melancholy has a particular grammar in which it is expressed and by which it is understood. Like the forms of the inflected noun, melancholy progresses in a coherent pattern: it has a kind of verbal logic that makes it intelligible. In representing Hamlet’s melancholy in grammatical terms, Polonius implicitly identifies melancholy with the form of its expression. For melancholy to have a grammar, a system of rules and conventions by which it abides, it can neither be simply a material object like black bile nor an abstract state of mind that subsists solely in the interior. It must be a public practice, extended over time and enacted in the world, like a spoken or written language. Melancholy is thus not simply indicated by melancholic behavior, but inherent in it, manifest in the “forms, moods, shapes of grief” by which it is publically known (1.2.82). As Wittgenstein writes, “We do not see facial contortions and *make the inference* that he is feeling joy, grief, boredom. We describe a face immediately as sad, radiant, bored, even when we are unable to give any other description of the features.—Grief, one would like

to say, is personified in the face.”²⁵ Here we find no distance between one’s inward state and the shows and signs that lend it material form.

I acknowledge the risk of perversity in attributing such insight to Polonius, a figure of fun throughout the play, and the most frequent object of Hamlet’s scorn. The use of the grammar school term is probably intended, in part at least, to suggest Polonius’s pedantry. But I believe that Polonius represents an exaggerated form of an idea that we find latent throughout the play, and even in Hamlet himself, despite his protestations: that inward states, far from being inexpressible, are “grammatical,” structured by conventional rules and manifest in patterns of language and behavior.

This perspective is represented in many of the early plays of Shakespeare, which often use grammatical terms to trace affective states and relationships. In *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, for instance, we find the heart of the lover Armado declined as a noun in the ablative case by the servant Moth, adapting a lesson from Shakespeare’s grammar book, William Lily’s *Short Introduction of Grammar*: “‘By’ heart you love her, because your heart cannot come by her; ‘in’ heart you love her, because your heart is in love with her; and ‘out’ of heart you love her, being out of heart that you cannot enjoy her.”²⁶ Moth’s description of Armado’s loving heart suggests that the love relationship has a distinctive grammar, a structure analogous to that of the sentence. If Armado the lover is the nominative subject and his beloved Jacquenetta the accusative object, then the heart is the ablative instrument of their love, the means by which Armado loves and the state in which he loves. Love is not a thing confined to the inward space of the heart, but extended across the lived practice of the loving relationship, manifest in its words, vows, and rituals.

Titus Andronicus, like *Hamlet*, prominently features the problem of expression, but in *Titus* the failure of expression is attributable to the physical destruction of the organs of speech rather than the divide between feeling and expression. Observing his brother Marcus with his arms crossed, Titus describes his own manner of mourning after the loss of his hand:

Marcus, unknot that sorrow-wreathen knot.
Thy niece and I, poor creatures, want our hands,
And cannot passionate our tenfold grief
With folded arms. This poor right hand of mine
Is left to tyrannize upon my breast,
Who, when my heart, all mad with misery,
Beats in this hollow prison of my flesh,
Then thus I thump it down.²⁷

To “passionate” one’s grief is to give it material form in the gestures and motions of the body: lacking his left hand, Titus must beat his breast with his right in order to properly perform his sorrowful state.²⁸ Lavinia’s ruined frame, deprived not only of its hands but of its tongue as well, is an even greater obstacle to articulacy, but she is nevertheless able to express herself in silent action. Mute and mutilated, her very body has become a “map of woe,” manifesting its grief in the wounds it bears and the postures and positions it assumes (3.2.12). Titus pledges to train himself in her particular manner of expression, adopting the language of grammar school pedagogy in order to do so:

Speechless complainer, I will learn thy thought.
 In thy dumb action will I be as perfect
 As begging hermits in their holy prayers.
 Thou shalt not sigh, nor hold thy stumps to heaven,
 Nor wink, nor nod, nor kneel, nor make a sign,
 But I of these will wrest an alphabet,
 And by still practice learn to know thy meaning.
(3.2.39–45)

In Titus’s account, “thought” is equivalent to “dumb action” and “meaning” to “alphabet”: there is no distinction between the sorrow Lavinia feels and the gestures in which that sorrow is expressed. The difficulty of understanding does not result from a gulf between outward sign and inward feeling, but from the strange and novel language Lavinia is forced to adopt in her maimed condition. Titus has once again become a student in studying this new tongue: imagining himself in the grammar school, he vows to learn the “alphabet” of Lavinia’s passion.

Hamlet’s melancholy, Armado’s love, and Lavinia’s sorrow are all represented as possessing a particular grammar, a set of rules and structures by which they are rendered legible and coherent. I take these allusions to the discourse of the grammar school as evidence of a worldview profoundly influenced by Humanist pedagogy, a worldview that, to quote Bacon’s censure, is more concerned with “words than matter.”²⁹ Within this worldview, the art of grammar becomes a paradigm of human existence and experience, roughly analogous to the way computer programs have come to serve as a model for cognition in our own day. The implications and consequences of the two models, however, are very different, for while the computational analogy leads us to conceive of the mind as abstract and interiorized, as software within a material frame, the language of grammar demands that we view human existence as an expressive and pragmatic way of being in the world.³⁰

In “Fiction as ‘Grammatical’ Investigation,” Schalkwyk argues that “it may be fruitful to regard fiction, or at least certain kinds of fiction, as being already engaged in the kind of “grammatical investigation” with which Wittgenstein was concerned in his philosophical work. If Wittgenstein opens the doors of philosophy to fiction, it may be that his kind of philosophy has long been a guest in its house.”³¹ Literature, like the language jokes that held particular interest for Wittgenstein, provides us “with a glimpse of the way in which our sense of the world is embedded at the intersection of our language and our historical and practical being in the world.”³² It produces this insight in a variety of ways: “it may seriously question or disturb grammatical forms, it may simply expose them to view, or it may highlight them in order to explicitly endorse or confirm them.”³³ Through its innovative and self-conscious uses of language, literature already engages in a method analogous to that of Wittgenstein: questioning, revealing, and emphasizing the forms and functions of language. I want to suggest that, owing to the centrality of grammatical study in Humanist pedagogy, early modern literature performs these tasks in a particularly insistent way. In using the terms of grammar to represent the passions of characters like Hamlet and Lavinia, the plays of Shakespeare emphasize the interdependence of inward states and the language in which they are expressed.

II. HAMLET’S INEXPRESSIBLE PASSION

Throughout much of the Shakespearean canon, the inward life of passion is inseparable from the outward mode of its expression. In the character of Hamlet, however, we find articulated with arresting and seductive eloquence the idea that outward expression is merely the garb of passion, more apt to conceal passion’s truth than to convey it. Passion, Hamlet claims, is precisely that which cannot be conveyed through language or performance: it is the definitive characteristic of an interiority that surpasses outward expression, that which, in Danner’s words, “cannot be represented, cannot be named, and therefore cannot be translated into the world without the taint of mediation.”³⁴ The language and gesture previously understood as coextensive with passion become shallow ostentation to Hamlet, who insists again and again that mere words cannot fathom his feeling, that his inner life is ultimately inexpressible.

Hamlet thus moves from a rhetorical and grammatical understanding of the world, an understanding characteristic of sixteenth-century

Humanism, to a metaphysical one in which reified things assume priority over words. As I have suggested, this need not be taken as an epochal shift towards modernity: Hamlet's perspective accords with the reaction against Humanism taking place at the beginning of the seventeenth century and with such venerable discourses as the Pauline language of Letter and Spirit.³⁵ It does, however, signal a shift within Shakespearean drama, a transition from a theater often defined by self-conscious displays of polished rhetoric to one characterized by a complex and often baroque syntax that seems to reflect "the spontaneous rhythms of a mind in motion."³⁶ The pleasure that was once taken in lyricism and rhetorical flourish gives way to a pronounced discomfort with the conventions of language that we see exemplified in the character of Hamlet. But the anti-rhetorical position, as Russ McDonald observes, is paradoxically achieved not by the rejection of the language arts, but through a more accomplished and sophisticated use of rhetoric itself.³⁷

The exemplary case of the tension between language and inwardness is, of course, Hamlet's speech in act one, scene two. His first extended piece of dialogue, the speech seems intended to define his character against the world of the court in which he moves. Claudius and Gertrude are dismayed by what they perceive as Hamlet's excessive mourning, which violates the traditionally moderated and circumscribed performance of grief for a lost parent. Gertrude asks why Hamlet's practice of mourning "seems . . . so particular" when it is part of the natural order of things for a son to lose his father (1.2.75). Hamlet responds:

Seems madam? Nay, it is. I know not 'seems'.
 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,
 Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
 Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
 That can denote me truly. These indeed 'seem',
 For they are actions that a man might play,
 But I have that within which passes show,
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
(1.2.76–86)

Hamlet's speech surveys his appearance in the wake of his father's death, detailing the gestures and postures of his grief: black clothing, tears, labored breath, a downcast demeanor. These are the conventional

signs and practices that comprise what we might call the grammar of mourning. But for Hamlet, these practices cannot entirely “denote” his particular experience of sorrow. As Katharine Eisaman Maus writes, the speech emphasizes the gulf “between signs (‘trappings and suits’) and what they signify (‘that within’).”³⁸ The outward shows of grief are merely signs of an inward phenomenon that ultimately surpasses signification.

Though it is often read solely as a contribution to philosophy or intellectual history, the speech serves a number of rhetorical purposes in the context of the scene. It displays Hamlet’s loyalty to the memory of his father and offers a subtle but caustic rebuke to the hypocritical courtiers whose grief so quickly gave way to celebration of the new king’s marriage. Beckwith’s reading of the speech emphasizes the relationship with Gertrude, suggesting Hamlet is motivated by the sting of his mother’s betrayal. Hamlet’s speech is “a response to a felt abandonment by the mother who has theatricalized his deepest feeling [by implying that it is mere “seeming”]. He has lost his father, and now apparently his mother too is vanishing from him.”³⁹ Schalkwyk notes that the speech establishes Hamlet’s singularity and idiosyncrasy, casting him as a melancholic and moralistic figure at odds with the corruption of the court: “If losing fathers is common, then Hamlet asserts the uncommonness of his persistent grief in contrast to those around him that have been happy to turn from death to life.”⁴⁰ One important point that is easy to overlook is the fact that Hamlet’s performance of grief is not minimized but exaggerated. Though the speech dismisses the importance of his mournful behavior, we learn from the reactions of the Claudius and Gertrude that this behavior has been especially pronounced. Hamlet has violated the conventions of mourning not by refusing to participate in what he derides as empty ritual and ceremony, but by performing his grief in an especially emphatic way. Calling this performance inadequate is in effect to emphasize it yet again: “if only you knew the full extent of my grief: these outward shows, extravagant as they are, are only the shadows of its substance.” These readings focus on the function of the speech rather than its referential content.

It should be noted that Hamlet never explicitly names his inward state, referring to it only obliquely as “that within.” Though this nebulous phrasing has provoked a variety of theories, both sound and extravagant, about what occulted thing Hamlet might harbor within himself, it should most likely be read as a strategy of occlusion intended to emphasize the inexpressibility of his sorrow.⁴¹ I want to propose that the missing term in Hamlet’s language is *passion*, conceived as

an inward affection opposed but intimately related to outward action. This specific term is implied by Hamlet's use of the term "actions" to describe the outward gestures and expressions opposed to "that within." "Action" is a richly significant word in the speech: adjacent to "play," it suggests play-acting and theatricality, the occupation of the stage actor. But in this context, the word also suggests a general metaphysical category, a mode of active being opposed to passion. This becomes clear when the speech is compared to contemporary discourse on passion and action. Robert Burton employs remarkably similar language in writing that "Weeping, Sighing, Laughing . . . are motions of the Body, depending upon these precedent motions of the minde: Neither are tears, affections, but actions."⁴² Thomas Wright makes the same distinction in writing that "In many externall actions may be discoverd internall passions."⁴³ If the outward gestures of mourning and other performances of feeling are "actions" in the language of Shakespeare, Burton, and Wright, then "that within" is perfectly aligned with Burton's "affections" and Wright's "internall passions."

The discussions of Burton and Wright rely on a binary opposition between passion, conceived as a passive experience or suffering, and action, understood as an outward performance or gesture. Passion and action are organized along the same lines as body and mind, and external and internal. According to this model, the sorrow Hamlet passively experiences upon the death of his father is opposed to the action he takes to express or convey this sorrow, such as mourning or weeping (though it may motivate these actions).⁴⁴ Hamlet's speech on the inexpressibility of his sorrow thus relies upon the formal opposition of inward passion and outward action, of the passive affections and impressions of the mind or soul and the actions and gestures of the body.

Passion and action are common terms in Renaissance intellectual discourse, appearing as rhetorical *topoi*, logical oppositions, and metaphysical categories.⁴⁵ The frequency with which they appear in the text of *Hamlet* has led scholars to speak of the play's "preoccupation with passion and action."⁴⁶ Shakespeare would have almost certainly first encountered the technical sense of the terms in his grammar lessons: Lily defines the verb as a part of speech that "betokeneth doing: as Amo, I love. or sufferinge: as Amor, I am loved. or Being: as Sum, I am."⁴⁷ The grammarian John Brinsley makes the connection between passion and the passive voice yet more explicit: "A verb passive," he writes, "betokeneth passion."⁴⁸ Like Polonius's description of Hamlet's melancholy, then, the speech is marked by the influence of the grammar

school, albeit in a more subtle way. Through its explanation of the voice of the verb, the grammar book provides a basic model for the opposition of “doing” and “suffering” that may be accommodated to broader discourse on human agency and experience. When Hamlet, to cite but one example of the terms in the play, reproaches himself for overindulgence in passion and a consequent lack of action, he alludes to this model:

Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
Th'important acting of your dread command?
(3.4.107–9)

To suggest an essential distinction between what Wright calls external actions and internal passions is to allude to an oppositional structure derived from linguistic use and formalized in the traditions of grammar. The negative space of the interior, that which “passes show,” can only be constructed in opposition to the actions of the exterior. The reason Hamlet can darkly, yet nevertheless meaningfully, gesture towards this inward space is that it is already understood as the opposite of outward action. The passion-action antinomy allows the elided passion to be recognized, its space already established by the schema of grammar. Though the speech insists upon the inexpressibility of inward passion, it communicates this passion by reference to the conventional oppositions of grammar: ineffability is paradoxically enabled by the structure of language. Hamlet’s passion, in spite of his refusal even to pronounce its name, abides by a particular grammar.

That Hamlet’s “that within” speech, “the *locus classicus* of early modern ‘interiority,’” draws on the language of the grammar school is telling evidence of the harmony of language and inwardness in the play.⁴⁹ It is also symptomatic of a wider relationship between language and metaphysics, for the metaphysical categories of passion and action themselves, I would argue, are abstracted from linguistic use. Aristotle’s *Categories*, perhaps the first systematic theorization of passion and action, derives the concepts from the use of passive and active verbs. Observing that we say a thing “cuts” or “is cut,” “burns” or “is burnt,” Aristotle derives the general categories of action and passion through what is essentially an exercise in descriptive grammar: “‘Cuts’ or ‘burns,’ again, indicates Action [poieîn], ‘is cut’ or ‘is burnt’ a Passion [páschein].”⁵⁰ The more familiar sense of passion as a psychological state is likewise abstracted from the everyday use of language: when a man is angry, writes Aristotle, “We say ‘Such a man is affected.’

Such states are passions [páthe].”⁵¹ In drawing on the language of the grammar school to depict the inward passions of its characters, *Hamlet* highlights the relationship between grammar and metaphysics that has persisted throughout the long tradition of Western philosophy.⁵²

Though we often find Hamlet adopting an anti-rhetorical and anti-grammatical pose, at times he too evokes the atmosphere of the grammar school, especially in the antic scenes. The first encounter with the ghost features both of these positions and demonstrates the tension between them. Upon meeting with this truly transcendent being, a thing undreamt of in the philosophy of the age, Hamlet swears to put behind him the learning of his youth:

Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, whiles memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter.

(1.5.95–104)

Here it seems the commonplaces and *sententiae* of Humanist pedagogy have been rendered irrelevant by a being beyond human comprehension. The existence of the ghost demands a radical revaluation of all learning: it is a thing of which no word can give an adequate account. But immediately upon the pronouncement of this vow against learning, Hamlet turns to his tables to record a commonplace learned from the ghost's tale: “My tables. Meet it is I set it down / That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain” (1.5.107–108). In the collaborative article “Hamlet's Tables,” Peter Stallybrass, Roger Chartier, J. Franklin Mowery, and Heather Wolfe note the irony that a play based upon an earlier version of the Hamlet story would evince such hostility towards the tradition of commonplacing: “While Hamlet scorns the audience's table-books in Q1, the scripts through which he comes into existence are themselves the products of writing tables and commonplace books.”⁵³ The irony is emphasized by Hamlet's reference to the “book and volume of my brain” (1.5.103). Even the vow to forswear the practices of Humanism, then, suggests how deeply the methods and materials of learning are embedded in early modern discourse, providing the vocabulary in which thought and memory are conceptualized.

When Horatio and the guards reenter the scene, Hamlet begins to adopt that performance of madness he calls his “antic disposition,” and the reverence and awe he had displayed towards the ghost suddenly gives way to wry mockery (1.5.180). As Hamlet asks the assembled witnesses to swear to conceal what they have seen, the ghost echoes his request, repeatedly calling out “Swear” from below the stage. Each of these commands is met with an impertinent reply from Hamlet, beginning with “Ah ha, boy, say’st though so? Art thou there, truepenny? Come on, you hear this fellow in the cellarage. Consent to swear” (1.5.158–160). In addition to their surprisingly jocular quality given Hamlet’s usual veneration of his father, the lines are noteworthy for the way they draw attention to the theatrical situation. The reference to the ghost as a “fellow in the cellarage” reveals him to be an actor crouching beneath the floor of the stage rather than a spirit journeying back to Purgatory. (Coleridge, in his only criticism of the play’s artistry, found this scene “hardly defensible”).⁵⁴ Hamlet’s name for the ghost, “truepenny,” is a reference to Tom Truepenny, the loyal servant figure from *Ralph Roister Doister*, a sixteenth-century comedy by the schoolmaster Nicholas Udall intended for performance in the grammar school.⁵⁵ The reference recalls the pedagogical culture that featured prominently in Shakespeare’s early comedy.

This drily ironic and self-consciously theatrical performance is punctuated by a simple Latin tag: “*Hic et ubique?*”, Hamlet asks in regard to the ghost’s seemingly ubiquitous presence (1.5.164). The phrase has no definite origin, but scholars have proposed a number of possible sources, typically invoking theological and devotional traditions.⁵⁶ Stephen Greenblatt—suggesting that the phrase recalls the discourse of Purgatory, clearly relevant to the scenes with the ghost—cites a prayer for the dead that was part of the ritual practice of Catholic England: “*Avete, omnes animae fideles, quarum corpora hic et ubique requiescunt in pulvere*” [Hail all faithful souls, whose bodies here and everywhere do rest in the dust].⁵⁷ In addition to this echo of Catholic devotional practice, Greenblatt also notes that the phrase would have suggested “that Hamlet, like his friend Horatio, is something of a scholar.”⁵⁸ But in an age of Latin learning, one would hardly need to be a scholar to articulate such a simple expression. I believe the phrase would have recalled the basic exercises of the grammar school rather than the kind of scholarship one would associate with Wittenberg.⁵⁹ Between the reference to Udall’s grammar school play, the echo of schoolboy Latin, and the generally irreverent tone of the scene, we might be led to consider Hamlet’s “antic disposition”

as a kind of schoolboy demeanor, an attitude prone to wordplay and self-consciousness of the kind prevalent in the early comedies. This attitude is in dramatic contrast with the seriousness of the vow to put away childish things that Hamlet pronounces upon the ghost's initial departure. By dryly describing the otherworldly presence of the ghost in the terms of the schoolroom, the text emphasizes the tension in the play between the ineffable and the ordinary.

III. BEING, SUFFERING, ACTING

Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy—almost certainly the best-known passage in Shakespeare, and perhaps all of English literature—raises once again the question of passion and action, and once again recalls the language of the schoolroom. The speech appears during the execution of Hamlet's plan to expose the king's guilt by means of the play, though it seems to have little dramatic bearing on the events that surround it. Performed between the resolution to stage the play and the instructions to the players, the speech is a moment of contemplation and reflection that interrupts the course of Hamlet's most pragmatic activity:

To be or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them.
(3.1.56–60)

Despite the reference to "the question," the speech actually raises two questions, two rhetorical *topoi* of the kind debated in the schools. The first of the two—"To be or not to be"—is descended from the question of whether an unhappy life is better than none at all. As Harold Jenkins observes, this was a traditional topic for dialectical argument, and Augustine's discussion of it in *De libero arbitrio* closely anticipates the language of the speech: "It is not because I would rather be unhappy than not be at all, that I am unwilling to die, but for fear that after death I may be still more unhappy" (quoted in 3.1.56–88n). The second question—whether it is nobler "to suffer" or "to take arms"—concerns the opposition of passion and action, which as we have already seen is one of the play's preoccupations. Critics have associated this question with the long tradition of ethical debate on the opposed virtues of patient endurance and active valor.⁶⁰ Proposing such topics gives

the speech “the structure of a formal academic debate,” recalling the traditions of Humanist pedagogy.⁶¹

The precise relationship between these two questions is ambiguous and has provoked considerable critical argument. The second question is presented as a gloss or restatement of the first, but the opposed terms under consideration in the questions—being and not being in the first, suffering and acting in the second—are not easy to reconcile with one another. The order of the terms as they are presented would associate being with suffering and not being with acting, contrary to our likely expectations. As being is typically taken for human life or existence, it should imply a kind of activity. Some have claimed that this must be the case, and that the order of the terms is simply inverted in the second statement.⁶² But the simplest reading equates being with suffering: as Jenkins puts it, “the alternatives are to ‘suffer’ or to ‘end’, to endure or to die; and these are what the body of the speech discusses” (3.1.56–88n). Being is thus represented as perpetual suffering: to be is to endure the slights, oppressions, and disappointments of life in an ongoing exercise of “patient merit” (3.1.74).

In elaborating this view, the speech moves from the broad and abstract terms of the opening lines to an intimately detailed, if jaundiced, account of lived experience, enumerating such hardships as the frailties of the body, the injustices inflicted by the great, the frustrations of legal process, and the disappointments of love. One’s only available relief within this darkly inflected worldview, in which life is merely a succession of hardships and failures, is self-slaughter or a show of vain resistance that leads inevitably to death. Thus “end” bears a bitter double meaning: to end one’s troubles is not to overcome them, but to confront them in an act of futile heroism that will end one’s troubles and one’s life by the same stroke. In its uncompromising refusal to accept the injustices and indignities of the world, the speech is poised between defiance and despair. Significant for our purposes is the way the speech represents a variety of forms of life and ways of engaging with the world, drawing evocative if economical portraits of the disappointed lover, the humiliated servant, the petitioner denied access to justice. These scenes of humble, ordinary existence stand in contrast with the exalted abstractions with which the speech begins.

In addition to the resemblance to Augustine, critics have noted echoes of Plato, Cicero, Plutarch, and Montaigne in the speech.⁶³ Aristotle’s discussion of “being and not being” in the *Metaphysics*—perhaps filtered through Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*, which quotes the Greek “*on cai me on*”—is often cited as an influence.⁶⁴ I would like

to propose an additional source for the speech, a humble one amidst this philosophical pantheon, which has thus far gone unnoticed: Lily's lesson in the infinitive: "The infinitive signifieth to do, to suffer, or to be."⁶⁵ Lily's "to do," "to suffer," and "to be" anticipate Hamlet's "To be," "to suffer," and "to take arms" with considerable precision. It would be too much to say that the speech's opening is a direct adaptation of Lily, but given the frequency with which Shakespeare cites Lily and the close resemblance of the terms it seems likely that the lesson was at least echoing in Shakespeare's memory when he composed the lines.

The nature of human being, agency, and passivity expressed and elaborated with such eloquence in the speech may thus be traced to a simple lesson in verbal voice. The echo of Lily shows that the abstract terms with which the soliloquy opens, which have lead many critics to associate the speech with various metaphysical schema, are not only "modes of being" but also ways of speaking (3.1.57–60n). The metaphysical categories of being, action, and passion are abstracted from grammatical positions: as we have seen, Aristotle derives the categories of *poiêin* and *páschein* from the fact that we say a thing does or suffers, and the first category—*ousía*, "substance" or "essence"—is abstracted from the statement that a thing is (as Wittgenstein writes, "*Essence* is expressed in grammar.")⁶⁶ That the background of Shakespeare's most "philosophical" speech runs backward through Aristotle and Plato to his adolescent training in grammar seems an apt allegory for this process, vividly representing the way that the concepts of philosophy emerge from the everyday uses of language.

As Peter Hacker writes, capacities such as reason, deliberation, and memory—though we may attribute them to animals in a rudimentary or attenuated form—"presuppose possession of a language. The limits of thought and knowledge... are the limits of the possible expression of thought and knowledge."⁶⁷ To act and to understand ourselves as temporal beings, for instance, we must have a grammar of temporality, or tense: it is "the use of a tensed language and of devices for temporal reference, that constitutes the primary criteria for ascribing to a creature knowledge, memory, thought, and belief involving such reference to the past or future."⁶⁸ Our sense of temporality is predicated on the fact that our language is a tensed language, for only by the mechanism of tense may we speak of what is, and was, and is to come. Without a tensed language, we would exist in time, but we would not be able to plan for the future, to ruminate on some distant memory, or—by means of the future anterior tense that so intrigued those in the Heideggerian tradition—to project ourselves into the future and consider what we will have been.

Just as temporality relies upon tense, the portrait of human agency and passion on display in Hamlet's speech is dependent upon the mechanism of verbal voice, the ability of active and passive grammars to express the position of the subject as one who acts or suffers in the world. Shakespeare's "dance of human passions" relies upon passive grammar to express that one is stricken by "The pangs of dispriz'd love" (3.1.72), stymied by "the law's delay" (3.1.72), or compelled to endure "the proud man's contumely" (3.1.71).⁶⁹ The suffering of the subject in these constructions is manifest in the structure of language. In prefacing its detailed narrative of lived experience with paradigmatic verbal forms ("to be," "to suffer," "to stand against") that echo the grammar book, the speech invites us to consider, to cite Schalkwyk again, "the intersection of our language and our historical and practical being in the world." In this way, the speech constitutes something like a "grammatical investigation": its rumination on being, suffering, and acting is an exploration of the power of grammar to express these concepts and an arresting reminder of the harmony of language and worldly existence.

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NOTES

¹ John Paterson, "The Word in *Hamlet*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 2 (1951): 47.

² William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (New York: Methuen, 1982), 2.2.119, 192. Hereafter cited parenthetically by act number, scene number, and line number. Editorial notes will be indicated by a lower case "n."

³ Erasmus, *De Ratione Studii*, in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, 86 vol., trans. Brian McGregor (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1978), 24:666–67.

⁴ Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, ed. Kenneth Palmer (London: Methuen, 1982), 5.3.108.

⁵ See Richard Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), 154–56; Robert Weimann, "Mimesis in *Hamlet*," in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Methuen, 1985), 275–91; and Bruce Danner, "Speaking Daggers," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 54 (2003): 29–62.

⁶ William Lily, *Brevissima institutio* (London, 1567), B2^v.

⁷ This is Gabriel Harvey's well-known description of *Hamlet* (and *The Rape of Lucrece*), which appears in a manuscript note in his copy of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Works*. The note is reproduced in an appendix to Jenkins's *Hamlet*, pages 573–74.

⁸ Sarah Beckwith, *Shakespeare and the Grammar of Forgiveness* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2011), 7.

⁹ Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 383.

¹⁰ Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, in *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 139.

¹¹ Joel B. Altman makes this point in *The Tudor Play of Mind*: “Standing on the edge of Elizabethan Humanism,” he writes, “[Hamlet] gives eloquent testimony to the failure of deep-searching wit to extricate itself from the limitations of its own condition” (*The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama* [Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1978], 10–11).

¹² Beckwith, 16.

¹³ Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 21.

¹⁴ Christopher Harvey, *Schola cordis* (London, 1647), 192; Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (New York: Penguin, 1977), 180.

¹⁵ Beckwith, 7.

¹⁶ Cummings, *Literary Culture*; Lynn Enterline, *Shakespeare’s Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Lynne Magnusson, “A Play of Modals: Grammar and Potential Action in Early Shakespeare,” *Shakespeare Survey* 62 (2009): 69–80; Jonathan Hope, *Shakespeare and Language: Reason, Eloquence and Artifice in the Renaissance* (London: Methuen, 2010); and Jeff Dolven, *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 2007).

¹⁷ Enterline, 1.

¹⁸ Anne Ferry, *The “Inward” Language: Sonnets of Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983), 66. See also Jacqueline T. Miller, “The Passion Signified: Imitation and Construction of Emotions in Sidney and Wroth,” *Criticism* 43 (2001): 407–21.

¹⁹ *OED*, 2nd ed., s.v. “declension, n.” See Shakespeare, *Richard III*, ed. James R. Siemon (London: Methuen, 2009), 3.7.188; and Shakespeare, *King Henry IV, Part Two*, ed. A. R. Humphreys (London: Methuen, 1966), 2.2.166 (the line in the Folio appears as “From a god to a bull? A heavy declension!” while the Quarto has “descension.”). See also the use of “decline” in *Richard III*—“Decline all this, and see what now thou art” (4.4.97)—which “connotes a scholastic exercise” according to Russ McDonald (*Shakespeare and the Arts of Language* [Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002], 38).

²⁰ See Lily, *Brevissima institutio*, A5^v.

²¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, ed. P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), §373.

²² Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §580.

²³ David Schalkwyk, *Speech and Performance in Shakespeare’s Sonnets and Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), 109.

²⁴ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §243, §257.

²⁵ Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, 2 vol., ed. G. H. Von Wright and Heikki Nyman, trans. C. G. Luckhardt and M. A. E. Aue (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), 2:§570.

²⁶ Shakespeare, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, ed. H. R. Woudhuysen (London: Methuen, 1998), 3.1.39–42. See Lily, *Brevissima institutio*, A5^v for his lesson in the ablative. T. W. Baldwin’s classic account of the Tudor grammar school points out the quotation from Lily: see *William Shakespeare’s Smal Latine and Lesse Greke*, 2 vol. (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1944), 1:570.

²⁷ Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Thomson, 2006), 3.2.4–11.

²⁸ Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* similarly uses “passion” as a verb to describe Venus’s performance of mourning for Adonis:

This solemn sympathy poor Venus noteth;
 Over one shoulder doth she hang her head.
 Dumbly she passions, frantically she doteth;
 She thinks he could not die, he is not dead. (*Shakespeare's Poems*, ed.
 Katherine Duncan-Jones and H. R. Woudhuysen [London: Thomson,
 2007], 1057–60).

²⁹ Bacon, 139.

³⁰ See Charles Taylor, "Cognitive Psychology," *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers I* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), 187–212 on the inadequacy of the computational model.

³¹ Schalkwyk, "Fiction as 'Grammatical' Investigation: A Wittgensteinian Account," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 53 (1995): 288.

³² Schalkwyk, "Fiction as 'Grammatical' Investigation," 292.

³³ Schalkwyk, "Fiction as 'Grammatical' Investigation," 292.

³⁴ Danner, 31.

³⁵ Peter Mack suggests that the rhetorical tradition may have begun to wane at the end of the sixteenth century, citing a decline in the production of rhetorical manuals beginning around this time (*A History of Renaissance Rhetoric: 1380–1620* [Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011], 32). See Margaret Ferguson, "Hamlet: Letters and Spirits," *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Methuen, 1985), 292–309 on Pauline discourse.

³⁶ Stephen Greenblatt, introduction to *Hamlet*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, 2 vol., ed. Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katharine Eisaman Maus (New York: Norton, 2008), 2:105.

³⁷ McDonald, 41.

³⁸ Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1995), 1.

³⁹ Beckwith, 18.

⁴⁰ Schalkwyk, *Speech and Performance*, 116.

⁴¹ Scholars have proposed that the phrase indicates a hidden Oedipal desire for his mother, a groping anticipation of Cartesian interiority, and resentment over his political disenfranchisement. In his classic statement of the Oedipal complex in *Hamlet*, Ernest Jones writes that Hamlet's "emotions are inexpressible . . . because there are thoughts and wishes that no one dares to express even to himself. We plumb here the darkest depths" (*Hamlet and Oedipus* [London: Victor Gollancz, 1949], 100). See Francis Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body* (London: Methuen, 1984) on Hamlet's gestures towards Cartesian metaphysics; and Margreta de Grazia, *Hamlet without Hamlet* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2007) for the political reading of Hamlet's "that within."

⁴² Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 2 vol., ed. Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicolas K. Kiessling, and Rhonda L. Blair (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 1:422.

⁴³ Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1630; facsimile; Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1971), 197.

⁴⁴ See Christopher Tilmouth, *Passion's Triumph over Reason: A History of the Moral Imagination from Spenser to Rochester* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007) on the motive capacity of passion in *Hamlet*.

⁴⁵ For accounts of passion and action in ancient, medieval, and early modern discourse, see Georgia Ronan Crampton, *The Condition of Creatures: Suffering and Action in Chaucer and Spenser* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1974); and see Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997).

⁴⁶ Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2004), 30. See also Tilmouth, 78–96. Action and passion have been key terms in the classic criticism of the play, from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to Samuel Taylor Coleridge to A. C. Bradley.

⁴⁷ Lily, *Brevissima institutio*, B2.

⁴⁸ John Brinsley, *The Posing of the Parts* (London, 1615), E3v.

⁴⁹ Schalkwyk, *Speech and Performance*, 115.

⁵⁰ Aristotle, *Categories*, trans. Harold P. Cook, *Aristotle: The Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1938), 2a. I have slightly altered the translation by replacing “Affection” with “Passion” as the translation of *páschein*. See F. E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1967) on the various senses of *páschein* and *pathos*.

⁵¹ Aristotle, 10a. As above, I have slightly altered the translation by replacing “affections” with “passions” as the translation of *páthe*.

⁵² Giorgio Agamben writes that “the history of the relations between philosophy and the science of language . . . is so rich in exchanges, crossings, and accidents that any attempt to distinguish the two with precision appears both necessary and impossible. Not only does the ancient tradition attribute to Plato and Aristotle the origin of grammar, but further, from the beginning, logical categories and grammatical categories have been so tightly interlaced as to appear inseparable” (“Philosophy and Linguistics,” in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy* [Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1999], 62).

⁵³ Peter Stallybrass, Roger Chartier, J. Franklin Mowery, and Heather Wolfe, “Hamlet’s Tables and the Technologies of Writing in Renaissance England,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55 (2004): 414.

⁵⁴ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare and Other English Poets* (London: George Bell, 1907), 358.

⁵⁵ See Nicholas Udall, *Ralph Roister Doister; Five Pre-Shakespearean Comedies*, ed. Frederick S. Boas (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1934), 113–206.

⁵⁶ Jenkins suggests that the phrase “sounds like a conjuration formula” (1.5.157n). Nevill Coghill observes that the property of being “here and everywhere” traditionally belonged solely to God or the devil, suggesting that Hamlet may be ruminating on the question of the ghost’s divine or diabolical nature (*Shakespeare’s Professional Skills* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1964], 10).

⁵⁷ The prayer is quoted and translated in Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001), 255.

⁵⁸ Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, 234.

⁵⁹ Lily’s list of adverbs relating to place lists only *hic*, but in the copy of the 1544 edition archived on Early English Books Online, the owner has added a handwritten *ubique* in the margins of the page on adverbs, suggesting that the two terms would have been commonly rehearsed by students. See Lily, *An Introduction of the Eyght Partes of Speche* (London, 1544), C8v.

⁶⁰ See Vincent F. Petronella, “Hamlet’s ‘To be or not to be’ Soliloquy: Once More into the Breach,” *Studies in Philology* 71 (1974): 72–88; and Douglas Bruster, *To Be or Not To Be* (New York: Continuum, 2007).

⁶¹ Greenblatt, introduction to *Hamlet*, 105.

⁶² See Davis D. McElroy, “‘To Be or Not to Be’—Is That the Question?” *College English* 25 (1964): 543–45.

⁶³ See Heinrich Anders, *Shakespeare’s Books: A Dissertation on Shakespeare’s Reading and the Immediate Sources of his Works* (Berlin: Georg Keimer, 1904), 275 for an

account of these influences. The resemblance to a passage in Florio's Montaigne—"If it be a consummation of ones being, it is also an amendment and entrance into a long and quiet night. Wee finde, nothing so sweete in life, as a quiet rest and gentle sleepe, and without dreams"—is striking, but Florio's translation appeared after *Hamlet* and it is impossible to establish that Shakespeare had encountered Montaigne at this point (quoted in Jenkins, 3.1.56–88n).

⁶⁴ See, for instance, Bruster, 17–18. See *Doctor Faustus, The Complete Plays*, ed. J. B. Steane (New York: Penguin, 1986), 1.1.12 for the text from Marlowe.

⁶⁵ Lily, *Brevissima institutio*, B3. Given the immense volume of *Hamlet* criticism, it is impossible be sure that the resemblance of these passages has entirely passed notice, but it does not form part of the standard literature on the speech. Despite listing many citations of Lily in Shakespeare as well as several sources for Hamlet's soliloquy, Anders's comprehensive source study does not connect the two.

⁶⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §371.

⁶⁷ P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 61.

⁶⁸ Hacker, 62.

⁶⁹ The "dance of human passions" is Wittgenstein's lukewarm description of Shakespeare's drama, which he struggled to appreciate (*Culture and Value*, trans. Peter Winch [Oxford: Blackwell, 1980], 36–37).